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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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I-90 ITS project resumes construction with high impact events

Contractor crews will resume work on the Interstate 90/Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) project next week. This project includes a number of items that will enhance traffic flow in the Spokane area.

The project includes that installation of six new cameras along I-90 between the US 195 Interchange and the Argonne Interchange. New units will be installed at Freya Street, Sprague Avenue Interchange east, Sprague Avenue Interchange West, Broadway Interchange, Park Road, and the Argonne Interchange. Traffic count equipment will be placed at all the camera locations and an eastbound changeable message sign will be placed near Custer Street. In addition, the five existing cameras will be replaced with new, more weather resistant models.

Early items on the schedule for this season include work that will require two temporary closures of the freeway.

One of the major components of this project is the installation of a changeable message sign in the vicinity of Custer Street, just east of the Spokane City limits. The sign is mounted on a structure that spans the entire width of the freeway. The support structure, known as a "sign bridge," is nearly 150 feet in length and will be lifted into place with a crane. For safety reasons, traffic cannot be allowed while this work is underway. Following the installation of the sign bridge, crews will return and place the actual electronic sign on the structure.

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- The sign bridge installation process is as follows:
 - On Tuesday and Wednesday, April 13 and 14, crews will assemble the sign structure on the ground. The work will be done on Fourth Avenue, (the street that is just adjacent to the south edge freeway) and will require that 4th be reduced to one lane.
 - On Thursday, April 15 at 10:00 p.m., eastbound and westbound I-90 will be reduced to one lane in each direction between the Thor/Freya Street Interchange and the Sprague Avenue Interchange. At 11:00 p.m., traffic will be detoured off the freeway for approximately one hour while the structure is lifted into place and crews connect the sign bridge to the previously installed uprights. Traffic will be allowed to resume immediately after the structure is secure although only one lane in each direction will be open for several hours while crews complete the work.
 - A fully-signed traffic detour will be in effect during this short closure. Eastbound motorists will exit at Freya, follow Third Avenue (turns into Fourth at Havana), and re-enter the freeway just east of Havana Street. Westbound drivers will exit at Sprague Avenue, follow Sprague to the west, turn left at Freya, the turn right on Second and re-enter the westbound lanes. During the closure the eastbound Altamont and Freya on-ramps will be closed. The westbound Sprague Avenue and Fancher Road on-ramps will also be closed while traffic is detoured off the freeway. In addition, the Fancher on-ramp will remain closed for most of the evening and overnight hours.
 - On Friday, April 16, eastbound I-90 will be reduced to one lane beginning at 8:00 p.m. for about four hours. During this period crews will install the hardware that will hold the electronic readout.

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The second component to be completed in the sign is mounting the eastbound electronic readout board on the sign bridge.

- The process will go like this:
 - On Monday, April 19 at about 10:00 p.m., eastbound I-90 will be reduced to one lane. This allows the contractor to set up the crane and other equipment. At 11:30 p.m., eastbound I-90 will be closed for approximately one hour and the electronic sign will be lifted into place.
 - A fully-signed traffic detour will be in effect. Eastbound motorists will exit at Freya, follow Third Avenue (turns into Fourth at Havana), and re-enter the freeway just east of Havana Street. The Altamont and Freya eastbound on-ramps will be closed.
 - Single-lane eastbound traffic will resume immediately after crews have secured the device. The rest of the work that morning will only require lane closures and should be done at about 2:30 a.m. early Tuesday morning.

This project is continuing from the 2003 construction season. The new cameras and sign should be activated later this year.

Intermountain Electric Inc. of Spokane is the prime contractor on this project. Their bid for this for this construction work was \$1,637,252. Darrel McCallum is the WSDOT project engineer.

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